



Town and Country Planning Act 1990

1990 CHAPTER 8

PART III

CONTROL OVER DEVELOPMENT

Meaning of development

56 Time when development begun.

- (1) Subject to the following provisions of this section, for the purposes of this Act development of land shall be taken to be initiated—
 - (a) if the development consists of the carrying out of operations, at the time when those operations are begun;
 - (b) if the development consists of a change in use, at the time when the new use is instituted;
 - (c) if the development consists both of the carrying out of operations and of a change in use, at the earlier of the times mentioned in paragraphs (a) and (b).
- (2) For the purposes of the provisions of this Part mentioned in subsection (3) development shall be taken to be begun on the earliest date on which any material operation comprised in the development begins to be carried out.
- (3) The provisions referred to in subsection (2) are sections [F161L(5) and (7),] [F270D,] 85(2), 86(6), 87(4), [F389], [F490B,] 91, 92, [F593G,] [F693H,] [F794 and 108(3E)(c) (i)] [F8] and paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A].
- (4) In subsection (2) “material operation” means—
 - (a) any work of construction in the course of the erection of a building;
 - [F9(aa)] any work of demolition of a building;
 - (b) the digging of a trench which is to contain the foundations, or part of the foundations, of a building;

Changes to legislation: Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Section 56 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 02 June 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes

- (c) the laying of any underground main or pipe to the foundations, or part of the foundations, of a building or to any such trench as is mentioned in paragraph (b);
 - (d) any operation in the course of laying out or constructing a road or part of a road;
 - (e) any change in the use of any land which constitutes material development.
- (5) In subsection (4)(e) “material development” means any development other than—
- (a) development for which planning permission is granted by a general development order [^{F10}, a local development order or a Mayoral development order] for the time being in force and which is carried out so as to comply with any condition or limitation subject to which planning permission is so granted;
 - ^{F11}(b) development of a class specified in paragraph 1 or 2 of Schedule 3;] and
 - (c) development of any class prescribed for the purposes of this subsection.
- (6) In subsection (5) “general development order” means a development order (within the meaning of section 59) made as a general order applicable (subject to such exceptions as may be specified in it) to all land in England and Wales.

Textual Amendments

- F1** Words in s. 56(3) inserted (15.11.2011 for specified purposes, 15.1.2012 for specified purposes, 6.4.2012 for specified purposes, 3.8.2012 for specified purposes, 6.4.2013 in so far as not already in force) by [Localism Act 2011 \(c. 20\)](#), s. 240(5)(j), [Sch. 12 para. 2\(a\)](#); S.I. 2012/57, art. 4(1)(h) (with arts. 6, 7, 9-11); S.I. 2012/628, art. 8(a) (with arts. 9, 12, 13, 16, 18-20) (as amended (3.8.2012) by S.I. 2012/2029, arts. 2, 4); S.I. 2012/2029, arts. 2, 3(a) (with art. 5) (as amended (6.4.2013) by S.I. 2013/797, art. 4); S.I. 2013/797, arts. 1(2), 2
- F2** Word in s. 56(3) inserted (26.12.2023 for specified purposes) by [Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 \(c. 55\)](#), [ss. 113\(3\)](#), [255\(3\)](#) (with s. 247)
- F3** Word in s. 56(3) inserted (25.9.1991) by [Planning and Compensation Act 1991 \(c. 34, SIF 123:1\)](#), [ss. 32](#), [84\(2\)-\(4\)](#), [Sch. 7 para. 10\(1\)](#) (with s. 84(5)); S.I. 1991/2067, [art. 3](#) (subject to art. 4)
- F4** Word in s. 56(3) inserted (26.12.2023 for specified purposes) by [Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 \(c. 55\)](#), [ss. 114\(2\)](#), [255\(3\)](#) (with s. 247)
- F5** Word in s. 56(3) inserted (31.3.2024 for specified purposes) by [Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 \(c. 55\)](#), [ss. 111\(3\)](#), [255\(3\)\(b\)](#) (with s. 247); S.I. 2024/389, [reg. 2\(g\)](#)
- F6** Word in s. 56(3) inserted (26.12.2023) by [Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 \(c. 55\)](#), s. 255(3), [Sch. 11 para. 2](#) (with s. 247)
- F7** Words in s. 56(3) substituted (15.11.2011 for specified purposes, 15.1.2012 for specified purposes, 6.4.2012 for specified purposes, 3.8.2012 for specified purposes, 6.4.2013 in so far as not already in force) by [Localism Act 2011 \(c. 20\)](#), s. 240(5)(j), [Sch. 12 para. 2\(b\)](#); S.I. 2012/57, art. 4(1)(h) (with arts. 6, 7, 9-11); S.I. 2012/628, art. 8(a) (with arts. 9, 12, 13, 16, 18-20) (as amended (3.8.2012) by S.I. 2012/2029, arts. 2, 4); S.I. 2012/2029, arts. 2, 3(a) (with art. 5) (as amended (6.4.2013) by S.I. 2013/797, art. 4); S.I. 2013/797, arts. 1(2), 2
- F8** Words in s. 56(3) inserted (12.2.2024) by [Environment Act 2021 \(c. 30\)](#), s. 147(3), [Sch. 14 para. 3\(2\)](#) (with s. 144); S.I. 2024/44, [reg. 2\(1\)\(e\)](#) (with [reg. 4](#))
- F9** S. 56(4)(aa) inserted (27.7.1992) by [Planning and Compensation Act 1991 \(c. 34, SIF 123:1\)](#), s. 32, [Sch. 7 para. 10\(2\)](#) (with s. 84(5)); S.I. 1992/1279, [art. 2](#) (with art. 3)
- F10** Words in s. 56(5)(a) substituted (12.2.2015 for specified purposes, otherwise prosp.) by [Infrastructure Act 2015 \(c. 7\)](#), s. 57(5)(d), [Sch. 4 para. 3](#)
- F11** S. 56(5)(b) substituted (25.9.1991) by [Planning and Compensation Act 1991 \(c. 34, SIF 123:1\)](#), [ss. 31\(4\)](#), [84\(2\)-\(4\)](#), [Sch. 6 para. 10](#); S.I. 1991/2067, [art. 3](#) (subject to art. 4)

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Modifications etc. (not altering text)

C1 S. 56 applied (with modifications) (3.11.1995) by [S.I. 1995/2863](#), reg. 3, [Sch.](#)

Changes to legislation:

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Changes and effects yet to be applied to :

- s. 56(3) word inserted by [2023 c. 55 Sch. 9 para. 1\(3\)\(a\)](#)
- s. 56(3) words substituted by [2023 c. 55 Sch. 9 para. 1\(3\)\(b\)](#)

Changes and effects yet to be applied to the whole Act associated Parts and Chapters:

- Act applied by [2023 asc 3 s. 79\(2\)](#)
- Act applied by [2023 asc 3 s. 83\(4\)](#)
- Act excluded by [2023 asc 3 s. 140\(4\)\(b\)](#)

Whole provisions yet to be inserted into this Act (including any effects on those provisions):

- s. 7(3) inserted by [2023 c. 55 Sch. 17 para. 2\(2\)](#)
- s. 7A(6) inserted by [2023 c. 55 Sch. 17 para. 2\(4\)](#)
- s. 7ZA inserted by [2023 c. 55 Sch. 17 para. 2\(3\)](#)
- s. 58B and cross-heading inserted by [2023 c. 55 s. 102\(1\)](#)
- s. 59A(3)(ba) inserted by [2023 c. 55 Sch. 8 para. 4\(b\)](#)
- s. 62B(5)(ca) inserted by [2023 c. 55 Sch. 17 para. 2\(5\)](#)
- s. 70(2)(azb) inserted by [2023 c. 55 Sch. 6 para. 3\(a\)](#)
- s. 70(3)(ca) inserted in earlier affecting provision [2016 c. 22, s. 5\(8\)](#) by [2023 asc 3 Sch. 13 para. 194](#)
- s. 70(3A) inserted by [2017 c. 20 Sch. 3 para. 2](#)
- s. 70A(5A) inserted by [2023 c. 55 Sch. 6 para. 4\(a\)](#)
- s. 70A(10)(11) inserted by [2023 c. 55 s. 110\(4\)\(b\)](#)
- s. 70B(5A)(5B) inserted by [2023 c. 55 s. 110\(5\)\(b\)](#)
- s. 73B inserted by [2023 c. 55 s. 110\(2\)](#)
- s. 74(1C)(aa) inserted by [2023 c. 55 Sch. 6 para. 5\(b\)](#)
- s. 75ZA and cross-heading inserted by [2016 c. 22 s. 155](#)
- s. 83(1A)-(1C) amendment to earlier affecting provision [2004 c. 5, s. 45\(2\)](#) by [2011 c. 20 Sch. 8 para. 14\(4\)\(5\)Sch. 25 Pt. 16](#)
- s. 83(1A)-(1C) inserted by [2004 c. 5 s. 45\(2\)](#)
- s. 83(2)-(2B) amendment to earlier affecting provision [2004 c. 5, s. 45\(3\)](#) by [2011 c. 20 Sch. 8 para. 14\(4\)\(5\)Sch. 25 Pt. 16](#)
- s. 83(2)-(2B) substituted for s. 83(2) by [2004 c. 5 s. 45\(3\)](#)
- s. 83(4) inserted by [2004 c. 5 s. 45\(4\)](#)
- s. 85(1A) inserted by [2004 c. 5 s. 45\(6\)](#)
- s. 93(5)(6) inserted by [2017 c. 20 Sch. 3 para. 6](#)
- s. 94(1)(e) and word inserted by [2023 c. 55 Sch. 9 para. 1\(15\)](#)
- s. 102(1A) inserted by [2023 c. 55 Sch. 6 para. 9\(b\)](#)
- s. 106A(9A) inserted by [2023 c. 55 s. 125](#)
- s. 106ZA inserted by [2016 c. 22 s. 158\(1\)](#)
- s. 106ZB inserted by [2016 c. 22 s. 159\(1\)](#)
- s. 106ZB(2)(a) omitted by [2023 c. 55 s. 130\(3\)\(b\)](#)
- s. 108(1A)(1B) inserted by [2015 c. 7 Sch. 4 para. 15\(4\)](#)
- s. 108(3A) inserted by [2004 c. 5 Sch. 6 para. 6](#)
- s. 108(3B)(ba) inserted by [2015 c. 7 Sch. 4 para. 15\(6\)](#)
- s. 108(3B)(ba) word omitted by [2023 c. 55 Sch. 9 para. 1\(16\)\(d\)\(i\)](#)
- s. 108(3B)(bb) inserted by [2023 c. 55 Sch. 9 para. 1\(16\)\(d\)\(ii\)](#)
- s. 108(3DA) inserted by [2015 c. 7 Sch. 4 para. 15\(7\)](#)
- s. 108(3DB) inserted by [2023 c. 55 Sch. 9 para. 1\(16\)\(e\)](#)
- s. 141(6) inserted by [2017 c. 20 Sch. 3 para. 7](#)

- s. 169(1)(a) words renumbered as s. 169(1)(a) by 2017 c. 20 s. 26(5)(a)
- s. 169(1)(b) inserted by 2017 c. 20 s. 26(5)(b)
- s. 170(8BA) inserted by 2017 c. 20 s. 26(6)
- s. 174(2AA)(b) words substituted by 2023 c. 55 s. 113(6)
- s. 208(5A) inserted by 2008 c. 29 Sch. 10 para. 9(2)
- s. 303(1ZZA) inserted by 2023 asc 3 Sch. 13 para. 87
- s. 303(10A) inserted by 2015 c. 7 Sch. 4 para. 19(3)
- s. 303(12) inserted by 2015 c. 7 Sch. 4 para. 19(4)
- s. 303A(1A)(za) inserted by 2023 c. 55 Sch. 8 para. 7(2)(a)
- s. 303A(9B) inserted by 2023 c. 55 Sch. 8 para. 7(4)
- s. 303A(10)(za) inserted by 2023 c. 55 Sch. 8 para. 7(5)
- s. 303A(12) inserted by 2023 c. 55 Sch. 8 para. 7(6)
- s. 303ZB inserted by 2023 c. 55 s. 134
- s. 314A inserted by 2023 asc 3 Sch. 13 para. 90
- s. 324(1A)(a) words in s. 324(1A) renumbered as s. 324(1A)(a) by 2023 c. 55 Sch. 9 para. 1(20)(a)
- s. 324(1A)(b) and word inserted by 2023 c. 55 Sch. 9 para. 1(20)(b)
- s. 333(3ZZAA) inserted by 2023 c. 55 Sch. 9 para. 1(21)(b)
- s. 333(3ZB) inserted by 2016 c. 22 s. 159(2)
- s. 333(3ZZA) inserted by 2023 c. 55 Sch. 9 para. 1(21)(a)
- Sch. 1 para. 5(4) inserted by 2023 c. 55 Sch. 17 para. 2(7)(c)
- Sch. 1 para. 7(10)(10A) substituted for Sch. 1 para. 7(10) by 2023 c. 55 Sch. 8 para. 11(2)
- Sch. 4B para. 11(3)-(5) inserted by 2017 c. 20 s. 7
- Sch. 4B para. 8(2)(fa) inserted by 2023 c. 55 s. 99(1)(b)
- Sch. 4B para. 8(2)(ca) inserted by 2023 c. 55 s. 102(2)(a)(ii)
- Sch. 4B para. 8(4A)(4B) inserted by 2023 c. 55 s. 102(2)(b)
- Sch. 4B para. 5(5)(za) inserted by 2023 c. 55 Sch. 6 para. 12(a)
- Sch. 4B para. 8(2)(da) inserted by 2023 c. 55 Sch. 6 para. 12(b)
- Sch. 4B para. 8(2)(ea) substituted for Sch. 4B para. 8(2)(e) by 2023 c. 55 s. 99(1)(a)
- Sch. 7 para. 12(1)-(1C) amendment to earlier affecting provision 2004 c. 5 s. 45(9) by 2011 c. 20 Sch. 8 para. 14(7)
- Sch. 7 para. 12(1)-(1C) substituted for Sch. 7 para. 12(1) by 2004 c. 5 s. 45(9)
- Sch. 9 para. 1(1A) inserted by 2023 c. 55 Sch. 6 para. 13(b)
- Sch. 9A inserted by 2016 c. 22 Sch. 13
- Sch. 13 para. 24A inserted by 2017 c. 20 s. 26(7)